

REMARKS/ARGUMENT

Request for Extension of Time:

A Request for Extension of Time has been filed herewith.

Regarding the Claims in General:

Claims 1, 4-40, and 42-72 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 4-9, 12-17, 20-29, 32-37, 40, 42-43, 45-50, and 52-72 are presently under consideration by the Examiner. Claims 10, 11, 18, 19, 30, 31, 38, 39, 44, and 52 stand withdrawn from consideration at this time as being directed to the non-elected species, and claims 2, 3, and 41 have been canceled without prejudice.

Regarding the Prior Art Rejections:

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 3, and intervening claim 2, and claims 2-3 have been canceled without prejudice. Similarly, claim 40 has been amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 41, and claim 41 has been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1 and 40 should therefore now be allowable.

Conforming amendments have also been made to claims 4, 9, 12, 13, 21, 42, and 72 such that all of the dependent claims under consideration should also now be allowable.

Regarding the Withdrawn Claims:

Allowed claims 1, 15, 21, 22, 43, and 49 are deemed to be generic to the elected and non-elected species. Withdrawn claims 10, 11, 18, 19, 30, 31, 38, 39, 44, and 52 are directly or indirectly dependent on these generic claims, and accordingly should also be considered and allowed at this time.

Regarding Other References Cited by the Examiner

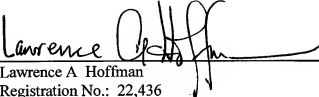
The other references cited by the Examiner but not applied have been considered, but the present claims are not believed to be anticipated or rendered obvious by these references.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS BEING
SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY
THROUGH THE PATENT AND
TRADEMARK OFFICE EFS FILING
SYSTEM ON December 20, 2006.

LAH:lac


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